

Service Date: December 20, 1984

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE REGULATION
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

* * * * *

IN THE MATTER of the natural gas)
explosion and probable violations)
of the Belle Creek Gas Association)
_____)

✓ DOCKET NO. 84.12.81
ORDER NO. 5104

✓ 84-44

NOTICE OF PROBABLE VIOLATION

AND PROPOSED COMPLIANCE ORDER

On November 12, 1984, at approximately 1:15 p.m. a natural gas explosion occurred at the mobile home of Max Morris in the lower trailer court in Belle Creek, Montana.

The explosion was apparently caused by a build up of gas underneath the Morris home from a leak below the ground under the home at a threaded nipple which had been connected to a tee in the incoming service line (lateral) through a short section of ASTM D2513 plastic pipe to the 3/4 inch service line which continued under the house, then outside the house, then continuing back under the house and outside through a riser up to a regulator.

The plastic pipe was part of a recent repair job when the 3/4 inch portion of the service line that was threaded into the tee developed a corrosion leak in and around the threads.

The plastic section was attached to the steel pipes at each end in a sleeve-like manner and was clamped with a "radiator hose" type adjustable stainless steel clamp.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Pipeline Safety Regulations, Part 192, Code of Federal Regulations Title 49, of The Pipeline Safety Act of 1968, et seq., are

administered in Montana by The Public Service Commission.

2. The Commission staff inspected the site of the incident on November 19, 1984 with representatives from the Belle Creek Gas Association. During this inspection the following probable violations were found:

- A. A one-inch uncoated steel service line was installed underground and under a building but not in compliance with Section 192.361 e. and f.
- B. A plastic pipe was joined to a steel pipe by sleeving the plastic pipe over the steel pipe and clamping with an adjustable girth clamp (radiator hose type clamp) not in compliance with Sections 192.281; 192.283 and 192.285.
- C. The operator has not complied with the operating and Maintenance Plan on file with the Commission for the Procedure For Odorizing the Natural Gas Distribution System of Belle Creek Gas Association, Page 6, Items 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3 of the Operating and Maintenance Plan.
- D. The steel service lines (laterals) and risers are uncoated and have no cathodic protection from electrolysis-type corrosion occurrences. This is a probable violation to Section 192.455, External corrosion control; Buried or submerged pipelines installed after July 31, 1971.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

- 1. The Commission has jurisdiction, granted by Section 63-13-101, MCA, over the matters in this Docket.
- 2. Pipeline Safety Regulations, Part 192, Code of Federal Regulations, Title 49, are administered by the Commission.

PROPOSED COMPLIANCE ORDER


✓ 1. The Commission hereby orders the Belle Creek Gas Association to respond within thirty (30) days from service date to the Probable Violations cited in the Findings of Fact 2.A, B, C, and D or to proceed to correct such violations, reporting progress on the corrective action every two weeks until the corrections are complete.


DONE IN OPEN SESSION THIS 17th Day of December, 1984 by a vote of 4 to 0.

BY ORDER OF THE MONTANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION



Thomas J. Schneider, Chairman


Danny Oberg, Commissioner


Howard L. Ellis, Commissioner


Clyde Jarvis, Commissioner

ATTEST:


Madeline L. Cottrill
Commission Secretary

(SEAL)

Any interested party may request the Commission to reconsider this decision. A motion to reconsider must be filed within ten (10) days. See 38.2.4806, ARM.